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The Kaiser and the Cameraman: W.H. Durborough on the Eastern Front, 1915

Cooper C. Graham

In the nitrate vaults of The Library of Congress in Culpeper, Virginia, repose thirty-two cans of film entitled "Durborough War Footage". They are an example of the way in which an important and fascinating collection of film can arrive at a film archive and then be more or less ignored, because of a variety of circumstances. In this case, the film was given to the American Film Institute which, in accordance with its policy, gave the film to the National Archives in Washington on 8 January 1986.[1] The film was nitrate positive printed on 1916 film stock. There was no main title, although there were intertitles. The first seven reels made up a more or less complete version of the film. The remainder of the film appears to have been additional footage, much of which repeated some of the sequences seen in the first seven reels at least twice.

On 7 December 1979 the National Archives had suffered a nitrate fire, and as a result the Archives decided to get out of the nitrate storage business as much as possible. The Archives printed most of its nitrate onto safety film and then destroyed the original nitrate film. However, the Library was interested in storing the Durborough nitrate because of its importance, and subsequently the National Archives deposited the original nitrate film at the Library of Congress, where it has been ever since. The film represents a great historical find, and the circumstances of its production make a great story. It also reflects some of the ideological conflicts in the United States during the uneasy period of the First World War in which America was trying to stay neutral, but finding it increasingly hard to do so.

The moving picture correspondent

On 25 March 1915, two Americans, Wilbur Henry Durborough and his assistant and cinematographer, Irving Guy Ries, sailed on the *Nieuw Amsterdam* from New York to Rotterdam. Their assignment was exciting. They were to go to Germany and take photographs and motion pictures of German life and the German Army during World War I for distribution in the United States, which had not yet entered the war. To carry out this assignment, Durborough had purchased a large, spectacular Stutz Bearcat, with which they were to tour throughout Germany and anywhere else that they could get permission from the Germans to travel. They were carrying various cameras, and in addition to those for still photography had two Universal cameras for moving picture film. They were also armed with visas and various official documents, including letters from Johann Heinrich Count von Bernstorff, the German Ambassador to the United States, and Bernhard Jakob Ludwig Dernburg, nominally in the United States as a representative of the German Red Cross, but who was then the *de facto* head of German propaganda in the United States.

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Durborough was born on 11 October 1882 in New Castle, Delaware. Nothing much is known about his early life or career, except that his father was a ship captain in New Castle. He started getting photographic assignments in the Chicago area in 1912, and photographed Theodore Roosevelt during his Bull Moose campaign on several occasions. In 1913 he became a photographer for the Newspaper Enterprise Association.

It was at the NEA that he really hit his stride. The Newspaper Enterprise Association was founded in 1902 by E. W. Scripps of the Scripps Newspapers. Unlike United Press or Associated Press, who covered hard news stories, the job of NEA was to provide sports, editorials, photographs, light stories, cartoons and human interest material to various newspapers, especially the newspapers in small or medium size towns which did not have the budget to provide these items locally. Durborough's photographs were often prominent in the NEA features. Durborough seems to have had a gift for selling himself as well as an obvious talent as a still photographer. Rarely seen without a cigar plugged into his mouth and usually wearing some sort of jaunty headgear such as a derby or a baggy cloth cap, he seemed the epitome of the confident self-promoter. In the newspapers, his photographs were usually signed "Durborough", or his name was included in the captions that he evidently wrote himself. Often, there were also pictures of Durborough himself with his subjects, an indication that Durborough's ambitions were to become a correspondent rather than simply a photographer. Very soon, he began to submit stories to run with his photographs.

Durborough traveled widely, and his photographs cover an extensive range of subjects reflecting the progressive era in America. He photographed hard-bitten militia and strike breakers in West Virginia, and sports pictures of the Washington Nationals, including the redoubtable Walter Johnson. He photographed politicians, and in the company of a reporter drove around southern Wisconsin chasing gypsies who had allegedly kidnapped a young Indiana girl. Perhaps most notably, he photographed the 1913 Calumet, Michigan copper strike, and made several stunning portraits of the strike's Queen, Big Annie Clemens, also known as Annie Klobuchar Clemenc, who has since become an icon of the feminist and labor movements.

In November 1913 Durborough left Chicago to photograph and film the Mexican Revolution. He stationed himself in El Paso, Texas, just across the border from the state of Chihuahua in northern Mexico, and became friendly with Pancho Villa, whom he photographed often. He obtained some excellent photographs of Villa's troops in action during the Second Battle of Ciudad Juarez, which was one of Villa's most famous fights. Durborough traveled to Vera Cruz in May 1914 with the American navy and marines, who had invaded that port subsequent to the Tampico Incident. United States sailors, picking up supplies on the gunboat *Dolphin* in Tampico, had by mistake entered a restricted area, been arrested by the Mexicans and paraded through the streets of Tampico. When the Mexican officials in Vera Cruz realized what had happened, they let the sailors go and made a verbal apology to the United States Navy. This was not sufficient for the admiral in charge of the unit, Henry Mayo, who insisted on a written apology from the Mexicans and further demanded that General Victoriano Huerta salute the American flag on Mexican soil. Huerta refused. To complicate the issue, there had been news that the German steamer *Yparinga* was delivering a shipment of arms amounting to fifteen million cartridges and two hundred machine guns to General Huerta in Vera Cruz from Hamburg (arms shipments were one reason why the usual area where the American Navy landed in Tampico had been restricted).

As will be discussed later, Germany at the time was trying with some success to stir up trouble between Mexico and the United States, so the events in Vera Cruz and Tampico added fuel to the fire. President Wilson, who despised Huerta, ordered the United States to intervene in Mexico at Vera Cruz; Durborough photographed the American response. Along with Durborough was Edwin F. Weigle, another photographer and cinematographer who worked for the *Chicago Tribune*, and who would be Durborough's companion as well as competitor in the next few years. In Weigle's report on Vera Cruz for the *Tribune*, he called Durborough "my associate", and claimed to have been the first man to have made motion pictures of Americans in actual warfare.[2]

After Mexico came the trip to Germany. Evidently, the trip was Durborough's idea. It is not clear whether Durborough knew Irving Guy Ries before he hired him to go to Germany with him. Ries had been in Mexico about the same time as Durborough, and made his own film about the Mexican Revolution in 1913, called *Barbarous Mexico*. Both men were working around Ciudad Juarez about the same time, and

Fig. 1. Capt. Wilbur H. Durborough at his desk at U.S. Signal Corps Headquarters, Washington, D.C., 29 January 1919. [National Archives Signal Corps Photo 36123.]

it would have been odd if they had not bumped into each other. Also, they were both active in the same profession in Chicago at about the same time. According to a statement that Durborough later made to the Department of Justice, Ries was not his first choice. He had wanted to hire a person named MacDonald who worked for Hearst, but the Newspaper Enterprise Association felt that MacDonald did not have enough experience, while Ries was already an experienced movie cameraman – having worked for the Industrial Film Company for a year and a half – and also spoke fluent German.

The German Side of the War

Germany approved the trip, and others like it, for several reasons. While Germany may have been doing reasonably well militarily in 1915, it was losing the propaganda war in the United States. It felt, not without reason, that French and British propaganda dominated the media, especially on the Anglophile East Coast, and the cosmopolitan West Coast as well. The only route to get news from Germany to the United States was via London and, especially early in the war, the British censored all news out of Germany. So America tended to hear only the Allied side of the story.

Germany had not helped itself much in the propaganda war, either. The Germans' propaganda in the United States had been amateurish – either far too pedantic, or with little concept of the kind of message to deliver to the American public. But their basic problem went further than this. The Germans had an expression for a certain kind of propaganda: *Propaganda der Tat*, or propaganda of the deed. Although they may have had an expression for it, Germany's deeds in the first part of the war often put the lie to their words. Germany's violation of the neutrality of Belgium had been a propaganda disaster from which it never totally recovered. Germany tried to make an issue of the supposed use by the English and French of dum-dum bullets, specifically outlawed by the Hague Convention, only to invent and then employ on the battlefield chlorine gas, phosgene gas and mustard gas – as well as invent-

ing the flamethrower – which made dum-dum bullets seem like rather small beer. The Germans had suffered bad experiences in the Franco-Prussian War with *francs-tireurs* (French not in uniform who sniped at German troops), and had a developed a policy of mass reprisals against civilian populations for any acts against German soldiers by irregulars. So they shot numerous civilians in Belgium on little or no evidence of hostile acts to the Germans.[3] Unrestricted submarine warfare had also become an issue between Germany and America by January of 1915, although the *Lusitania* would not be sunk until May. Whatever their words, German deeds were menacing.

There had already been German sabotage attempts against American industry, and Germany was clearly stirring up discord among America, Japan and Mexico. Even their early successes in the war tended to work against them, because their battlefield victories suggested anything but an unprepared, peace-loving nation trying to defend itself against encirclement.

However, in the American mid west a vein of anti-war sentiment ran deep, partially because of the pacificism of leaders of the Progressive movement, such as Senators Robert La Follette and George Norris, as well as the traditional dislike of the Progressives toward the autocratic government of the Czar. In addition, there were many German and Irish immigrants in the cities of the Midwest, especially Chicago. In some cases, German-Americans were pro-German even to the point of being willing to fight on the German side. Most were not interested in fighting for Germany, but were not willing for America to enter the war on the side of Britain, Russia and France. The Irish in Chicago were strongly anti-British. The Irish Mayor of Chicago, Big Bill Thompson, wanted to "punch King George in the snoot", and had at first refused to greet French Prime Minister Viviani and General Joffre when they visited Chicago in 1917. Many of the Scandinavians in the central and upper Midwest were also lukewarm about involvement in a European war.

And there was another subgroup that should be mentioned. It seems almost grotesque in light of Nazi activity twenty years later, but Germany was also interested in recruiting German-Americans Jews for their cause. They reasoned that German Jews had been well assimilated in Wilhelmine culture, and were also relying on the Jews' dislike of the Czar's murderous pogroms in Russia and Poland. In general, the Jewish response to German propaganda was tepid. While some had done well in Germany, they also remembered the deep pockets of anti-Semitism in Germany, and the many barriers that remained to Jews in Germany.[4] Nevertheless, some Americans of German Jewish heritage, such as Jacob Henry Schiff and Samuel Untermyer, showed interest, and to some degree the Germans felt that their propaganda was off to a good start.

So it seemed almost inevitable that Chicago would become a center of pro-German sentiment. Both the *Chicago Tribune* and the *Chicago Daily News* were pro-German. James O'Donnell Bennett, correspondent for the *Tribune*, admitted to being pro-German and was an early voice decrying British propaganda about German atrocities. He was joined in his denial of German atrocities by John McCutcheon, also of the *Tribune*, and by Harry Hansen of the *Chicago Daily News*. *The Irish Voice* reported on 4 March 1915 that virtually all Irish American leaders in Chicago endorsed the refusal of aid to Britain, even though they might sympathize with France and Belgium.

Ambassador Count Bernstorff and propaganda chief Dernburg decided that it would be a good idea to send Americans to cover the war from the German side of the news. This was also true of motion pictures. The Germans had financed the American Correspondent Film Company to distribute *Messter-Woche,* the German newsreel, as well as some military documentary films, but Dernburg felt that the films were so heavy-handed that they would never appeal to the American audience, and so saw advantages to sending American film makers to Germany to cover the war.[5] Edwin F. Weigle of the *Chicago Tribune* got permission to photograph the war in Germany, covered the fall of Antwerp, and made a motion picture entitled *The German Side of the War*.[6] Donald Thompson photographed in Germany as well. So Durborough and Ries were in good company, and also had the enthusiastic support of the German government for their venture.

The submarine issue was already considered serious enough for Durborough and Ries to travel on a neutral Dutch ship. After they reached Rotterdam and cleared the Dutch-German frontier, they reached Berlin and settled into the Hotel Adlon. At first they had delays in getting film and photographs to the Newspaper Enterprise Association, because Durborough had no military pass for his automobile and could not travel freely, and because he did not risk

Fig. 2 (above). W.H. Durborough and unidentified German soldiers in his Stutz Bearcat.
[This, and all subsequent film images, from *Durborough War Pictures*, Library of Congress.]
Fig. 3 (below). Jane Addams, visiting Berlin for the Women's Peace Movement, was photographed by Durborough in May 1915. With Alice Hamilton (center), first woman on the medical faculty of Harvard, and Aletta Jacobs (right), Dutch pacifist and suffragette.

> mailing material to NEA via London. But his photographs began to appear in the newspapers by the end of June, most notably in the *Cleveland Press* (the Scripps flagship newspaper). On 24 June 1915, B.H. Canfield, president and general manager of NEA, wrote Scripps attorney J.C. Harper:
>
> > Did you see the first pictures by Durborough, from Germany? I consider the big picture in the sheets of June 23, showing German infantry in the field one of the best war pictures I have seen anywhere. I saw the moving pictures taken by the Chicago Tribune's photographer, which attracted big crowds, and the indications are that they are not in it with the work Durborough is doing.[7]

In May, Durborough and Ries had filmed a notable Chicagoan, Jane Addams, along with Aletta Jacobs and Alice Hamilton, who were in Berlin as part of the Women's Peace Movement. The three women had been traveling to all the capitols in Europe, trying in vain to persuade the responsible leaders in the various warring countries to make peace.[8] The delegation interviewed Foreign Minister Gottlieb E. G. von Jagow in Berlin on 21 May, and Reich Chancellor Theobald von Bethmann-Hollweg the following day. Durborough filmed and photographed several human interest stories, including Red Cross dogs at work helping the wounded; Her Excellency Princess Marie Antoinette von Ihne (wife of the famous architect Ernst von Ihne), who had founded the *Kriegsblindenheim* in Berlin, giving a tea for blind and wounded German soldiers; the German prisoner of war camp at Döberitz, and so on. He also filmed Ambassador James W. Gerard, the American Ambassador to Germany.[9]

It was in Berlin that Durborough met most of the foreign correspondents who were reporting the war to America from the German side. H. L. Mencken did not travel to Germany until 1917, shortly before America entered the war, but the cast of characters had not altered much, and Mencken, as was his custom, described them frankly, if not brutally:

> They were, in the main, an indifferent lot, and I was somewhat upset by my first contact with the unhappy fact that American newspapers are sometimes represented abroad by men who would hardly qualify as competent police reporters at home. Of those that I recall, the best was James O'Donnell Bennett, of the Chicago *Tribune*. He held himself aloof from the rest, and seldom joined in their continuous boozing in the bar of the Adlon Hotel. Others were Oswald F. Schütte, of the Chicago *Daily News*; Raymond Swing, who was also with the *Daily News*; William Bayard Hale, who represented Hearst; Seymour Conger, head of the Associated Press Bureau; Carl W. Ackerman,

> head of the United Press Bureau; Guido Enderes and Philip Powers, both of the Associated Press; Oscar King Davis, and Cyril Brown, both of the New York *Times*. There were yet others, but I forget them.[10]

In spite of his inclusion of Oswald F. Schuette as one of the indifferent reporters, Mencken appears to have had some regard for his work. In his book *The American Language*, Mencken credits Schuette for having invented the verb "steamrollered", as in "The Roosevelt forces steamrollered Taft at the convention", and the two men kept up a correspondence for the rest of their lives. Mencken also mentioned that Ambassador Gerard warned Mencken to have nothing to do with Oswald Schuette.[11]

It is clear that Schuette, and the *Chicago Daily News*, were affiliated with the Durborough moving picture enterprise. What exactly Durborough or Schuette gained from the affiliation is not fully understood, but it seems that Schuette was pro-German and perhaps felt that a film showing the German side of the war would gain credibility from an endorsement by the *Chicago Daily News*. Later advertising for the film states that the film showed in Chicago "under the auspices" of the *Daily News,* which suggests that the *Daily News* at least partially financed the film, or at least the local showings. Durborough filmed Schuette several times sitting in his Stutz, and even helping to repair it, and identified him by name in several intertitles, for example: "The American camp. Mr. Schuette of the Chicago Daily News, is some mechanic as well as one of the best newspapermen I have ever met." Later, Victor Fremont Lawson, the editor of the *Chicago Daily News*, said that when Jane Addams and her associates were in Berlin for the Women's Peace Conference it was Oswald Schuette that obtained an interview for them with von Bethmann-Hollweg – which may explain how Durborough knew where to get motion pictures of the ladies.[12] On the other hand, while Schuette certainly was part of the group that Germany allowed to go to the eastern front along with Durborough, and while he sent dispatches to the *Daily News* on a regular basis, he never mentioned Durborough in any of the dispatches.

Filming the Eastern Front

Around the first of July, Durborough, Ries, and many of their fellow correspondents got permission to travel to East Prussia. The photographic evidence is inconclusive, but if the Durborough footage is roughly chronological, the other correspondents would appear to include Oswald Schuette and James O'Donnell Bennett. The Eastern front in 1915 was a good place to be covering the war. Late in 1914, Hindenburg and his chief of staff, Ludendorff, had won a stunning victory over the Russian forces at Tannenberg, virtually destroying the Russian Second Army and taking 90,000 prisoners. In February 1915, at the first and second battles of the Masurian

Fig. 4 (above). Princess Marie Antoinetta von Ihne at one of her weekly garden parties for wounded veterans. One of Durborough's "human interest" subjects.
Fig. 5 (below). Durborough, Walter Niebuhr and Oswald F. Schuette working on the Stutz. The intertitle describes Schuette as a fine newspaperman and a good car mechanic.

Fig. 6 (above). German soldiers break from their cover in the woods somewhere in central Poland.
Fig. 7 (below). German lancers riding through Warsaw, 15 August 1915.

> Lakes, they managed to split the Russian forces and drive them totally out of East Prussia. The Russians then found themselves in a difficult situation, for if they attacked westward towards Germany from the Polish Salient they would be open to a flank attack from East Prussia on their north. In May the Austrian and German forces had won a great victory at Tarnow-Gorlice. The Austro-Hungarians, now reinforced by the German troops of von Mackensen, were pressing the Russians from the southwest. At the same time the German armies in the north under Hindenburg and Ludendorff also began an attack against the Russians. So in the summer of 1915 the Russians were being pushed hard eastward across Poland, fighting as they went, trading space for time in the Russian tradition. While the fighting on the western front had already become frozen into static trench warfare, the war in the east was still largely a war of movement. Best of all, from a correspondent's point of view, things were happening: the Germans were capturing cities, blowing up fortresses, taking huge numbers of prisoners, and armies were clashing in a dramatic manner. There were even cavalry charges, and Uhlans and Hussars are prominent in Durborough's motion pictures. Some of the shots in the films look more like the Crimean War than World War I. As Dennis E. Showalter puts it:

> > The East Prussian theatre, unlike the western front, was characterized by a low ration of force to space. In France and Belgium one usually knew where the enemy was: everywhere. Opportunities for tactical and operational reconnaissance were correspondingly limited. In the east at this stage of the war, cavalry was just as necessary as in the days of Napoleon or Genghis Khan.[13]

On leaving Berlin, Durborough and Ries traveled to East Prussia. Durborough photographed in Allenstein, near where the battle of Tannenberg had taken place, and filmed refugees in East Prussia who had been uprooted by the war, as well as the almost total destruction of Ortelsburg caused by the Russians on 30 August 1914 during the battle of Tannenberg. While in Posen (now Poznan in Poland), he had himself photographed with Friedrich von Bernhardi at his headquarters, and supposedly interviewed him.[14] Bernhardi was a Pan-German nationalist and had become famous, or infamous, for his book *Deutschland and der nächste Krieg*, in which he made a strong case, based on neo-Darwinist ideas, for the necessity of war and the total disregard of treaties. He advocated unlimited, ruthless aggression against Germany's neighbors. The British and French had made political capitol of Bernhardi's saber-rattling book, and German apologists were often in the press saying that Bernhardi had been misunderstood and that the book did not mean what it said, and that nobody had read it anyway. Bernhardi may have agreed to talk to Durborough because he had published another book that year, *Germany and England*, which was full of anti-British

propaganda and mentioned the possibility of a German-American and Irish- American political alliance against England. According to a statement he made after the war, he fully expected the United States to enter the war on Germany's side and was quite irritated when it did not.[15] If Durborough filmed Bernhardi, the film is not known to survive.

Although Durborough and Ries were six months late, they photographed the location of the Battle of Tannenberg. Many of Hindenburg's defenses were still in place. They also filmed at several locations of the Battle of the Masurian Lakes, most notably a frozen lake which the Russians had tried to cross. According to Durborough's intertitles, the Germans, who had mined it, blew up the ice and 10,000 Russians drowned, but I have been unable to verify this.

The Germans on the northern front, who had formed four new armies, crossed the Narev River in July. The Russian Army began to fall back ahead of the German Armies, who seemingly could do no wrong. At the same time the X Army was approaching Kovno, and the German IX army won a victory west of the Vistula. Meanwhile, on the southern front, August Von Mackensen's forces had crossed the San River, recaptured the fortress of Przemysl, and had cut the railway at Lublin. On 19 July the Russians decided that the German break-through on the Narev, plus the German-Austrian advances on their southern flank, had produced such a dangerous salient in Poland that they had to give up Warsaw, as well as most of Poland. Grand Duke Nicholas himself, the Tsar's Chief of Staff, ordered that retreat to the Vistula was now required, otherwise significant forces would be cut off in Poland. He told Alexeyev, the head of the Russian North West front, "You can evacuate Warsaw if you must." On 22 July the Central Powers crossed the Vistula. A general retreat was ordered, and the German XII Army, under General Max von Gallwitz entered Warsaw on 4 August 1915.[16]

The Germans organized a tour of Warsaw and points east for correspondents of the neutral countries, including Harry C. Carr of the *Los Angeles Times*, Oswald F. Schuette, James O'Donnell Bennett, Durborough and Ries, and representatives from Sweden, Spain, Holland and Rumania. Bennett reported:

> The German General Staff took us out over the wide Warsaw plain in a black and shining motor bus that held sixteen people uncomfortably and that from one point of view bore a sobering resemblance to an auto-hearse, while from another, it recalled those reeling vehicles that hurl the hostess and the entire dinner party through the icy streets to the theatre ....
>
> All along the way out of town triple spans of horses were plunging down the river bank with the munition wagons and out to the pontoon

Fig. 8 (above). Durborough talking with Count Kayserling at the Warsaw railroad station.
Fig. 9 (below). Warsaw as seen from Praga, on the east bank of the Vistula. The Alexandrowski Bridge is in the background.

Fig. 10 (above). German light field artillery. Many of Durborough's shot of heavier artillery were cut by German censors.
Fig. 11 (below). The Kaiser in his automobile at the Kaiser review. The man in the coat appears to be Durborough.

> bridge, which was fairly streaming with these wagon trains. On the masts at the entrance of this bridge the German flag and the Hungarian flag, which is broad stripes of green, white and red, and the most striking combination of national colors I ever saw, were flying, and half a mile down the yellow river the shattered spans of the enormous Alexandrowski Bridge, which is nearly 600 yards long, and which the Russians had blown up, went lurching along to Praga.[17]

Warsaw was undamaged except for the bridges across the Vistula dynamited to slow up the Germans. At least as Durborough photographed it, Warsaw seemed a very attractive city, and if there was no great enthusiasm for the Germans, there was not much evidence of any great Polish hostility to them. Durborough photographed fresh troops moving through the main streets, the Alexandrowski Bridge, the pontoon bridges that the Germans built across the Vistula, Zeppelins flying over the city, and refugees being ferried across the river by the Germans. He also shot footage in the Jewish Quarter. The Jews, after a hundred years of anti-Semitic Russian occupation, seemed happy enough to see the Germans, who at this point were promising a new era of equal rights for the Polish Jews. Hindenburg and Ludendorff had posters in Hebrew and Yiddish mounted promising a new era of civil rights for Jews in Poland.[18] In reality, the situation for the Jews in Poland did not change much.

In general, the Russian withdrawal from Poland was successfully accomplished, the major exception being the huge fortress of Novo Georgievsk (Modlin). The fortress was supposed to be the lynchpin of the Russian defenses, as well as a symbol of Russian rule in Poland, and the Russians could not bring themselves to abandon it. When it was suggested that the Russians evacuate the fortress, General Mikhail Vasiliyevitch Alexeyev, Commander of the Russian North Western Front, said that "spiritual motives speak for its defense".[19] Alexeyev did nothing to make it stronger, either, and sent only third-rate, worn out troops for its defense. A new belt of forts that were to strengthen its perimeter was never finished. In fact, the fort was obsolete, and could not have withstood even the artillery of 1870. It would have made no difference if Novo Georgievsk had been modernized and defended by better troops. There was virtually no example of any fortress holding out against the giant field guns of World War I. General Hans Hartwig von Beseler, known as "Battering Ram Beseler" to the correspondents, had reduced Antwerp and Liège to rubble with his 42 centimeter mortars, and was sent for to accomplish the same thing at Novo Georgievsk with Austrian 30.5 mortars. It did not help the Russians that the Germans captured their chief engineer while he was carrying all the plans for the fortress on his person. James O'Donnell Bennett described the eve of the fall of Novo Georgievsk rather poignantly:

> Beyond the immediate environs of Warsaw the plain is marked off in potato and cabbage patches, and the present picture derives its historical interest solely from superb trenches, many of which the Russians never used, and

> from the grass-grown humps of forts which Napoleon would have found useful – indeed, he started the building of the fortress of Novo Georgievsk in 1807 – but which did not withstand long in these days even so much as the threat of the Austrian ''thirty-point-fives ....''
>
> All day long we wandered amid such scenes, and finally, what with the body's thirst and leg weariness, the mind ceased to react upon them, and men looked with a tired eye on the most stupendous evidences of destruction and woe. Besides, to most of these men, the shifting and shattering of huge blocks of concrete and the laying bare of the inwards of fortresses was an old story, and the fresh survey of these things served only to confirm what they had leaned at Liège and Maubeuge and Antwerp and Przemysl, and that is this war brings the end of the stationary fortress and establishes the validity of the field fortress which moles and mines its way from week to week and month to month into the vitals of an enemy's position.[20]

On returning to Warsaw, Bennett and the other correspondents learned that two of the perimeter forts had already fallen, and the rest were expected to fall soon. Novo Georgievsk finally surrendered on 19 August. The Germans captured 700 guns and 90,000 Russian prisoners, including thirty generals.

Capturing the Kaiser

Now came the high point of Durborough's trip to Germany, and perhaps of his career. The correspondents were sent to view the fortress of Novo Georgievsk after it fell. Included in the party were Durborough, Ries, Bennett, Schuette and Harry Carr. While they were there, with great fanfare, the Kaiser arrived to review his troops and thank them for the great victory. There were 10,000 men there to greet the Kaiser, and among them was Field Marshal von Hindenburg. Bennett wrote in part:

> Then the Kaiser talked with and congratulated the mild-eyed and boyish-faced von Beseler, the German battering ram, whose gentle appearance is deceiving.
>
> The Chief of Staff, von Falkenhayn, and the War Minister, Wild von Höhenborn, joined the intimate group with the Kaiser's personal entourage of high dignitaries, the civil and military Cabinet, staff of Generals, and other notables hovering near for the impressive ceremony.
>
> A dozen honor men, heroes of Novo Georgievsk, were presented to the Kaiser, who questioned each and shook his hand. Then Hindenburg himself pinned Iron Crosses of the first class to their breasts.
>
> The Kaiser's every handclasp said plainer than words, "well done".
>
> Then came a dramatic moment as the Kaiser, with a catch in his voice called out, "Leb' wohl, meine Truppen" ("Fare well, my troops"). Several bearded fighters near me brushed their hands across their eyes, deeply moved. There was many a catch in 10,000 throats as the chorus "Adieu, Majestät" rose and died.[21]

Besides being a correspondent for the *Los Angeles Times*, Harry Carr also wrote articles for film journals in the Los Angeles area, and he wrote a special article in *Photoplay* about Durborough called "Capturing the Kaiser":

> I never believed they intended us to see it; but we accidentally bumped into the most majestic of military ceremonies – a Kaiser review … . Durborough begged our officer to let him slip in between the files and shoot a picture. The worthy captain looked as though he was going to faint at the suggestion. "Aw just for a minute", pleaded Durborough pathetically, but the captain had turned from him to a correspondent who had lit a cigar. "One does not smoke at a Kaiser review", he said in a thunderous stage whisper. Which shows what kind of a thing a Kaiser review is.
>
> Finally the ceremony came to a close. "Adieu, Comrades!" cried the Kaiser. "Adieu Majesty!" they shouted back. The ranks fell back; the square opened. The Kaiser strode back to his auto and climbed in. Spying Dr. Sven Hedin, the famous Swedish explorer, in the crowd, the Emperor beckoned him to the car. This was more than Durborough could stand. He suddenly broke away and we saw him running full tilt across the cleared place that the awe of the soldiers had left around His Majesty. Our captain was too much overcome to follow. The captain just stood waiting for an offended heaven to strike dead the impious wretch.

Fig. 12. German troops fall out after an attack on the Russians.

> To the frozen horror of the whole German Army, Durborough set up his machine about thirty feet away from the Kaiser's car and began grinding away for dear life.
>
> The Kaiser looked up and took in the whole situation with his quick, comprehending eyes. He laughed and lit a cigarette, talking a while longer, we believe, to give the plucky Yankee boy a chance.
>
> Finally the Emperor and Dr. Hedin shook hands; the chauffeur of the car threw in the hop and the Imperial auto started with a leap.
>
> As it went by him, Durborough took off his hat and said with honest sociability, "Much obliged!" The Kaiser straightened up and one gauntleted hand rose to the visor of his helmet in salute to the American boy who had had the nerve to snap an Emperor without asking permission.[22]

Carr's report of the incident got a banner headline in the *Los Angeles Times* on Sunday, 29 August 1915. The story ran on the top of page one and essentially recapitulated Bennett's story. But Carr does explain the change in position of the camera in relation to the Kaiser's automobile seen in the footage, which shows the Kaiser's automobile going right past the camera:

> After the review the Kaiser went to see the stricken fortress. We tried to follow, but our auto was stuck in the mud. The roads had been made into mush by the artillery and transport wheels, and our auto stuck fast. As we struggled with it a horn tooted peremptorily down the road, and an auto with the imperial banner demanded the way – we were blockading the German emperor on his return. His chauffeur glared murderously, but the Kaiser leaned out from the car and waved his hand reassuringly at our frantic chauffeur. When the road was finally clear and his auto went whirling past, the Kaiser answered our salutations with a military salute.[23]

If filming the Kaiser at Novo Georgievsk was the climax of Durborough's trip, it could be said that the capture of Warsaw and the fortresses surrounding it were the high point of the eastern campaign for Germany. After Warsaw, the Russians continued their methodical retreat eastward. As Norman Stone said, "Every day the Russians would retire three miles or so, construct a new line, and wait for the Germans to stumble towards it; then a new phase of the retreat would begin".[24] As they advanced, the Germans found fewer and fewer decent roads. They were also approaching the Pripet Marshes, a very difficult area in which to maneuver at any time. In the addition, autumn was coming and with it the *rasputitsa*, the period in the spring and fall when the Russian roads become a sea of mud. General Ludendorff still wanted to advance into Russia, but von Falkenhayn, the Chief of Staff, who remembered Napoleon and 1812 all too vividly, was in no hurry to strike into White Russia. The advance stopped on a north- south line reaching from Riga to Baranovichi to Pinsk to Dubno to Czernowitz. Essentially all of Poland was in German or Austro-Hungarian hands. It was time for Durborough and Ries to go home. Durborough sailed for America on the *Nieuw Amsterdam*.

Reporting back

But if it had been an eventful summer in Germany and Poland in 1915, the war was also heating things up in neutral America. On 7 May 1915, six weeks after Ries and Durborough left America, the Germans sank the *Lusitania.* It will be remembered that Bernhard Dernburg was generally in charge of press propaganda in America, and had provided Durborough and Ries letters for their trip to Germany. In May, Dernburg made a speech in Cleveland which attempted to justify the Germans' sinking of the liner. Dernburg had already made speeches explaining to America that Antwerp was a German harbor, that

Belgium belonged to Germany geographically, and that Germany needed areas like Morocco for settlement after the war. The reaction to the Cleveland speech was so sharp that the Germans decided to recall Dernburg. The new head of the German Press Office in America was Heinrich Albert, whose previous experience had been in the commercial sector. Albert, like Dernburg, had little or no experience in the field of propaganda.

Another result of the sinking of the *Lusitania* was that President Wilson ordered Secretary of the Treasury William Gibbs McAdoo, whose department controlled the Secret Service, to begin surveillance of the staffs of the German and Austrian Embassies. On 24 July 1915, Albert got on the New York subway from his offices at 45 Broadway, and fell asleep. When he awoke at 50th Street he exited, leaving a large briefcase crammed with secret documents on the train. Frank Burke, an American secret agent who had been following, grabbed the briefcase, and in spite of being chased by Albert managed to get away and deliver it that evening to Secretary McAdoo. It was decided to leak the documents to the New York *World*, which started to publish the contents on 15 August and continued for almost a week.[25]

What they had found was a treasure. While none of the documents was grounds for prosecution for espionage, there was an extensive description of undercover activities in the United States. There were lists of propagandists working in America and receipts showing that many were on the payroll of the German government. The Hearst newspapers had always been strongly pro-German, and for years had also been warning of the "Yellow Peril", insisting that the true enemy of America was Japan. Herbert Bayard Hale, who had written a biography of Wilson for the 1912 election campaign and who worked for the Hearst newspapers, turned out to have been an agent of Dernburg since 1914. Later it was learned that Hale was also paid $15,000 a year directly by the German government. It also turned out that the Germans had paid a lot of attention to film propaganda. The American Correspondent Film Company, which released German war films and newsreels, was funded by the German government, which had also paid Edward Lyell Fox, another pro-German correspondent, to work for the film company. In 1915, the American Correspondent Film Company had released *The Fighting Germans*, *The Warring Millions*, *The Battles of a Nation*, *System: the Secret of Success*, *The Battle and Fall of Przemysl* and *Friends and Foes*. At the 1918 Senate Subcommittee hearings on "Brewing and Liquor Interests and German and Bolshevik Propaganda", which were largely based on Albert's documents, testimony was given that stewards on Scandinavian ships had smuggled the film reels into New York.[26]

Putting American propagandists and journalists on the German payroll might not have been illegal *per se*. But the German actions left a bad taste in the mouths of most Americans, and the idea that America was infiltrated by Germans who were secretly manipulating its ideas and opinions also added to the general anti-German feeling in America.

So, upon their arrival in the United States, Durborough and Ries walked into a situation that must have seemed at least as strange as anything on the eastern front. On 10 August 1915, a German spy named Irving Guy Ries, fifty-five years old and allegedly born in Chicago, was arrested in Britain. When it heard that Ries had an American passport the United States Department of Justice opened an investigation, supposedly about passport fraud, but in reality about the possibility of German espionage and criminal activities in the United States – an investigation that involved not only Ries, but Durborough. The Department of Justice contacted Sam T. Hughes, editor of the Newspaper Enterprise Association, who vouched for Durborough:

> *Wilbur H. Durborough*, of a long line of American ancestors, up to last March had been working for [Hughes] for about three years, as field photographer, had been on the scene at the Vera Cruz fight, and had generally given entire satisfaction. He was entirely reliable and honest in every way.
>
> Some time last winter *Durborough* formulated the plan of going to Germany and getting war pictures. He wanted *Mr. Hughes* as manager of the *Newspaper Enterprise Association*, to finance him, but *Hughes* was willing to pay his salary only, so *Durborough* enlisted the interest of certain moving picture men who put up expenses in consideration of motion picture rights, while Hughes paid his salary for still photographs. Through said press association Durborough obtained strong letters from *Count Dernburg* at New York City, *Ambassador Von Bernstorff*, and other prominent Germans in Chicago. *Durborough* and *Ries* sailed from

> New York City on S. S. New Amsterdam for Rotterdam, March 25 last, *Hughes* having received wireless from them a few hours out of New York ... .
>
> Considering *Ries*, *Mr. Hughes* knew little except the fact that he had worked for the *Industrial Film Co.* as moving picture camera man, and went abroad with *Durborough* to do the same work. *Hughes* was questioned very closely concerning the men who put up his expense money for the foreign trip of these parties, but could give the name only of one of them, *S.T. Jacobs*, c/o *Hall Printing Co.* Townsend a Superior streets [sic] Chicago. He was under the impression that these promoters of the trip were German-Jews, but could not say whether they suggested *Ries*' name to *Durborough* or the latter engaged him on his own initiative. *Miss Hoffman*, first assistant in this office, was sure that *Durborough* at first intended to take a boy in the office (N.E.A.) but the promoters thought he was not experienced enough, and Ries was engaged by Durborough.
>
> It further appears from *Mr. Hughes* statement that although *Ries* is of German extraction and his associates were German, he could pass as an American any where, both in looks and speech. He has relatives in Akron, Ohio, but the street address could not be learned. He can speak German fluently ... .
>
> Asst. Manager at the *Industrial Film* Co. were interviewed and said *Ries* had worked for them for 1½ years and though a good workman, was dishonest and absolutely unreliable. He knew of the trip to Europe and said he believed it an absolutely bona fide trip, that *Durborough* was a high class man, but Agent's informant could not say anything good of *Ries*. *Ries* mail and hotel associations were also checked up, but nothing of interest could be learned.[27]

In a follow up report, agent Charles B. Tighe wrote that:

> [Edwin F.] Weigle is now stopping at the McAlpin Hotel in New York City lecturing at a theater near 44th and Broadway on the "German Side of the War". He is showing pictures taken by himself under the auspices of the Tribune in Germany on the Russian Front. Weigle is reported to have told local friends that he was with Durborough and Durborough and Reis [sic] at the Hotel Adlon in Berlin, Germany some time during June or July. Weigle and Durborough are competitors; and Weigle hearing that Durborough intended returning to America in August beat him by coming through Finland.[28]

Tighe also reported that Ries was highly regarded in the profession and that the Industrial Film Company was "knocking" him because they could not retain his services.

What had happened was that the Germans had obtained possession of Ries' passport in order to provide him with a visa. But while it was in their possession, they must have decided that since Ries was not very well known, they could get away with copying his passport in order to provide a forged copy to one of their agents, which they promptly did. The false Ries traveled to London and then applied in London for a visa to Rotterdam. The American vice-consul in London noticed that the passport appeared to be a forgery, and notified the police. The British arrested the phony Ries as a spy. Meanwhile, the Department of Justice opened their investigation into the matter and the story was picked up in the American newspapers. In the middle of this, Durborough and Ries arrived back from Germany, totally confused about what had happened. It was all eventually sorted out, and the department of Justice apparently dropped its investigation of Durborough and Ries (which is a pity, because we never learn if there were other "Big Germans" financing the trip).

Once again the Germans appear to have destroyed whatever advantage they might have gained from showing the film in America. While Germany wanted to have Americans showing the German side of the war, and to show its citizens bravely coping with the difficulties of the war both on the home front and in the field, it was revealed to be stealing the identity of Americans for espionage purposes, including those, like Ries, whom it had invited itself. In fact, the Germans forged rather a lot of passports, and had even set up a special office in America to accomplish this, apparently with the connivance of Ambassador Bernstorff.[29] It appeared once again, even before the Zimmermann telegram of 1917, that whatever Germany might say, its intentions towards

America were far from friendly. And it kept getting caught.

Even though the Department of Justice did not investigate Durborough and Ries any further, it continued to investigate Oswald Schuette:

> Referring to report of September 24, 1915, made by Agent B.D. Adait of the Chicago office, I this day proceeded to the Ritz Carlton Hotel [New York] where I held a lengthy interview with former Ambassador James G. Gerard. Mr. Gerard stated that there is no question regarding the violent pro-Germanism as shown by Schutte while representing the Chicago Daily News in Germany; that it still possible that Schutte still favors the enemy; that while at Berlin he was a close friend of one Swing, a fellow newspaper man and a young, all around worthless character.[30]

Gerard also identified Walter Niebuhr, whom Durborough had photographed along with the other correspondents and was now employed by the Bureau of Public Information, as pro-German. It is not surprising that Schuette wrote to H. L. Mencken that after the United States entered the war, when Schuette was working for *Leslie's Weekly*, his mail was still being opened by the War Department.[31]

Screening Durborough's War

The motion pictures taken by Durborough and Ries were released in December 1915 under the name *On the Firing Line with the German Army*. But Kitty Kelly, in her review of the film in the *Chicago Tribune,* cited the title as *With Von Hindenburg's Army at the Front* – the start of what would be a lot of confusion regarding its proper name. Kelly's review also gives an indication of how much the Germans had censored from the film:

> Almost they are big-gunless pictures. As they unreel they are good, but Mr. Durborough laments that they might be better. "Gee, if I had the stuff the censors took away from me in Berlin I'd never have to work any more in my life. They took 6,000 feet – all of my big guns, aeroplanes, scenes of many dead, and of suffering wounded. They were afraid of the construction we might put on the pictures, showing that the Germans were being killed and that sort of thing. The difficulties surrounding one, make it a wonder that any one gets away with any pictures at all."[32]

Fig. 13. Correspondents or propagandists: Durborough, Schuette, Bennett and Niebuhr in Berlin.

The film ran ten weeks in Chicago, five weeks in St. Louis, two weeks in Milwaukee, and two weeks in St. Paul (mostly cities with large German-American populations) to generally enthusiastic reviews.[33] In 1916, after its first run under the auspices of the *Chicago Daily News* and other papers, Durborough toured with the film himself to smaller towns all over the country, including Oelwein, Iowa; La Crosse, Wisconsin; Kennebec, Maine; Logansport, Indiana; Denton, Texas; Petersburg, Virginia; Waukesha, Wisconsin; Janesville, Wisconsin, Hagerstown, Maryland, and many others too numerous to mention.[34] According to the *American Film Institute Catalog*, the film at this time was nine reels long.[35] The distributor was the War Film Syndicate Company of Chicago, and the film was "produced", or at least processed, by the Industrial Moving Picture Company of Chicago. Apparently, this was the only film ever distributed by the War Film Syndicate.

The protagonists in this story (at least the American ones) subsequently led successful lives. Schuette survived accusations of pro-Germanism and stayed in journalism, working for *Leslie's Weekly* and the *Washington Post*, and during the New Deal became head of the National Association of Broadcasters, the radio equivalent of Will Hays' job in the movies. Later he was president of the American Press Club in Washington, and died in 1953. Ries had a long career as a cameraman. He filmed westerns, shorts (including some of the Hal Roach comedies

SEE
Storming the Big Russ Forts!
The Fall of Novo Georgievsk!
A Battle a Week Long!
Ripping Trenches with Big Shells!
Capturing 85,000 Russians!
Von Hindenburg's Great Drive!
Seven Months of Campaigning!
Charging the Enemy!
The Kaiser at the Front!!
The Chicago Daily News Presents
On the Firing Line with the Germans!
The Motion Picture Scoop of the War!!
Mr. Durborough Lectures at Every Performance
WEEK DAYS 11 A. M. TO 11 P. M.
FINE ARTS THEATER
Michigan Avenue, Near Van Buren St.
ADMISSION 25 CENTS
These Pictures Will Not Be Shown on Sunday

Fig. 14. Durborough appeared with the film in Chicago and other mid-western venues. *Chicago Daily Tribune*, 7 December 1917: 11.

with Laurel and Hardy), and in the 1940s switched from straightforward film photography to special effects. Some of his credits include The *Canterville Ghost*, *Forbidden Planet*, and many of the most famous MGM musicals, such as *An American in Paris*, *Singin' in the Rain*, *The Barclays of Broadway*, and *Invitation to the Dance*. He died in 1963.

As for Durborough, he returned to Mexico in 1916 to photograph and film Pancho Villa, accompanying Pershing's American punitive expedition.[36] This time Durborough had difficulty finding Villa, but so did General Pershing. As mentioned, he then toured and lectured with the "German" film in various small towns, evidently incorporating some footage from Mexico. In 1917 he once again became a still photographer for NEA. When America entered the war, Charles Hart, head of the Division of Films for the Committee on Public Information, began building a staff of cameramen and cinematographers for the U. S. Army Signal Corps and obtained the services of both Durborough and Edwin F. Weigle.[37] Both received commissions in the Signal Corps, so neither was evidently considered a security risk. During Durborough's active service he was at Fort Lewis in the state of Washington, and in January and February 1918 was involved in a large scale project to film wartime activities there.[38] While in Washington he also filmed the launching of the U.S.S. *Pershing* at the Olympia Shipyards.[39] He was then assigned to Signal Corps headquarters in Washington, D.C.

After the war, Durborough seems to have disappeared from the world of film and photography. In 1919, apparently while based in Philadelphia, he was general field manager of the Savold Tire Corporation, testing the tires by driving between Chicago and New York at a time when that drive was far from easy, and doing so without a tire change.[40] He and his family settled down in Ogden, Utah, where during World War II he did public relations work at Hill Field, now Hill Air Force Base, outside Ogden.[41] His son served in the Pacific during World War II. The family subsequently moved to California, where Durborough died, in San Bernardino, on 4 April 1946.[42]

But the film remains, and with it some questions.

Was it subsidized by the Germans? Evidently not. No mention of this film or its sponsors was made by the Senate Judiciary Committee hearings on Brewing and Liquor Interests and German and Bolshevik Propaganda, where there was far more interest in going after the Hearst press than any of the independent Chicago newspapers.

Federal Agent Spencer seems to have gotten it right when he suggested that the sponsors of the film were prominent Chicagoans. One of these appears to have been S. T. Jacobs. Siegfried T. Jacobs was a German- Jewish-American who ran the W. F. Hall Printing Company in Chicago.[43] When the film was copyrighted, Jacobs was listed as the claimant.[44] Another was John F. Cuneo, Sr. It was his son, John Cuneo, Jr., who gave the film to the American Film Institute. When I telephoned him on 13 December 2009, he said that his father, John Cuneo, Sr., was a Chicago millionaire who had also made his money in the printing business, the Cuneo Press being one of the largest and most successful printing companies in Chicago or anywhere. Cuneo also had moving picture interests, and he and a group of acquaintances had invested in the Essanay Moving Picture Company in Chicago. Durborough had come to Cuneo and asked for an undetermined amount of money so that he could make his film in Germany, and Cuneo agreed to invest. John Cuneo, Jr. remem-

bered the film sitting in the wine cellar of the Cuneo estate. He also stated that his father owned W.F. Hall, so that S.T. Jacobs may have been acting as his agent in copyrighting the film. Cuneo was friends with William Randolph Hearst, and printed the Hearst newspapers in Chicago.[45] Hearst was notoriously pro-German, but John Cuneo, Jr. was adamant in stating that the promoters of Durborough's film, including his father, were simply looking for a good investment, and that there was nothing ideological about the financing of the film.[46] According to Sara L. Stone of the Motion Picture, Sound and Video Branch of the National Archives, donor John Cuneo, Jr. gave the American Film Institute very little information about the film or his father's relation to it. Cuneo, Jr. said his father was a journalist during World War I, was in Europe sometime between 1913–1919, and sent a photographer to cover the war for his business. The donor thought the film had never been released.[47] As previously discussed, *The Chicago Daily News* also appears to have partially sponsored the film, although neither the *Chicago Tribune* nor the *Chicago Daily News* were Hearst papers.

Is the film complete? The nitrate itself is at the Library of Congress. The National Archives received thirty-three reels and printed a thirteen reel version, which is obtainable on videotape from the Archives. The first seven reels make up one version, while reels eight through thirteen are mostly duplicate material, sometimes with different intertitles. According to the *AFI Catalog*, the original film was nine reels (though contemporary advertising announced it as 8000 feet – see Fig. 14). So there is evidence, internal and otherwise, that suggests that the National Archives version cannot be complete. One examination made at the Library of Congress indicates that the Archives may have omitted to print one reel.[48] There is also evidence that some of the material is repeated, and that the most complete versions of some of the sequences were not printed by the National Archives. This suggests that it would be a very good idea to do a thorough restoration of this film. Even in the Archives version, which was evidently printed without much prior restoration, there were problems such as the images "breathing" (going in and out of focus because of some warping of the film). Today at least one reel of the film is becoming too brittle to print.

In the *Durborough War Pictures* footage at the Library of Congress, the intertitles read *With Von Hindenburg's Army at the Front*. Does this mean that

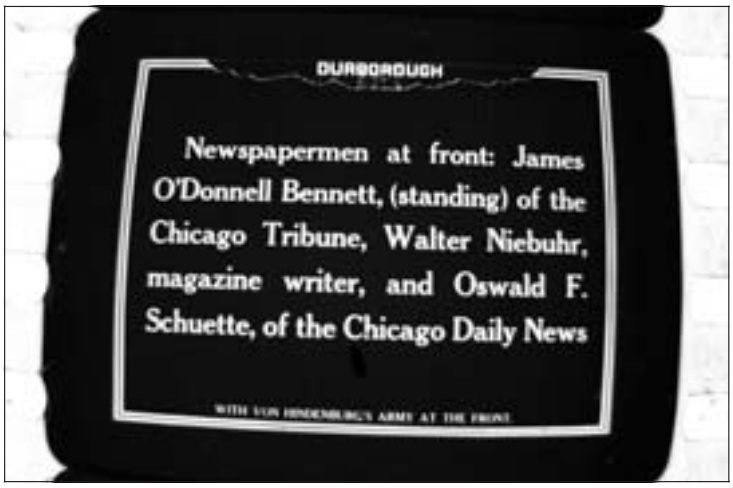
DURBOROUGH
Newspapermen at front: James O'Donnell Bennett, (standing) of the Chicago Tribune, Walter Niebuhr, magazine writer, and Oswald F. Schuette, of the Chicago Daily News

Fig. 15. Intertitles on the surviving print refer to the film as *With Von Hindenburg's Army at the Front.*

Durborough War Pictures (the only title under which any of Durborough's German material was registered for copyright) is the same film as *On the Firing Line with the Germans* and/or *With von Hindenburg's Army at the Front*? Or are we dealing with one of the other filmed accounts of the German side of the War? It seems probable that all three titles refer to the same film. Kitty Kelly in her review in *The Chicago Tribune* cited the title of Durborough's film as *With von Hindenburg's Army at the Front* when she saw it in December 1915, and she seems to have been one of the few reviewers who saw the picture, interviewed Durborough at the time of the release, and did not just write her review on the basis of the press releases and advertisements. Publicity material printed at the time lists various events covered in the film and these are nearly identical to the events in the surviving nitrate print. The copyright description for *Durborough War Pictures* also describes the same events as those in the existing film. The only discrepancy is that the copyright description of 15 December 1915 includes a sequence of the Kaiser leaving his summer palace at Potsdam which is not in the surviving film, although this could be part of the footage that deteriorated before the National Archives got to it.

It is most likely that the title *On the Firing Line with the Germans* just seemed catchier than any other title, and so the film was released that way. However, it is also possible that Durborough reworked the film, the titles, and the intertitles subsequent to its original showing in 1915. Film lecturers often did this, and the fact that the film stock dates from 1916, not 1915, the date of the film's original release, makes it more likely that this may be some sort of a revision.

One possibly helpful item in identifying the film for certain is that the donated print received seal of approval number 14704 from the Pennsylvania State Board of Censors. Unfortunately, the seal does not contain the date or title of the film being approved. To complicate matters further, the complete listing of films approved by the Pennsylvania State Board of Censors between 15 May 1915 and 30 November 1917 lists none of the titles – *Durborough War Pictures*, *On the Firing Line with the Germans*, or *With Von Hindenburg's Army at the Front* – as ever having been reviewed by it.[49]

Durborough's film is important and well worth restoration. It is a unique document of what Winston Churchill called the unknown war, the war of the central powers on the Eastern Front against Russia. It is also a record of the heyday of the period of the "Moving Picture Correspondent", when men like Durborough, Donald Thompson and Edwin F. Weigle were trying to accomplish the filmic equivalent of what foreign correspondents did for newspapers. In many ways, this story is more of a newspaper story than a film story, and it may be significant that Durborough did not continue down the path of cinema. This may have been because the documentary filmmaker is essentially anonymous, and Durborough was a man who craved the spotlight.[50]

Acknowledgments: I would like to thank Stephanie Smith of the Mahn Center for the Archives at Ohio State University Libraries, Bill Murphy, formerly of the National Archives, the helpful staff at the National Archives, The Library of Congress, in particular the Prints and Photographs Division, and as always the Motion Picture, Broadcasting and Recorded Sound Division. I especially want to thank Zoran Sinobad and Rosemary Hanes at the Reference Desk for their help with the many new ways of doing research at the Library, and as always the incredibly patient George Willeman in Culpeper for his frame enlargements.

Notes

1. *Durborough War Footage*, R.G. 200.496, National Archives. Motion Picture, Sound and Video Records Division, College Park, Maryland.
2. Edwin F. Weigle, "Newspaperman at Vera Cruz: Weigle of the Chicago Tribune, Made Photographs and Motion Pictures at Vera Cruz, Describes the Battle", *Miami Herald* (17 May 1914): 14. However, see footnote 36.
3. Martin Gilbert, *The First World War: A Complete History* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1994 [Owl Books Edition]), 42–43.
4. Reinhard R. Doerries, *Imperial Challenge: Ambassador Count Bernstorff and German American Relations, 1908–1917* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1989), 57–67.
5. For further information on the American Correspondent Film Company see Ron van Dopperen, "Shooting the Great War: Albert Dawson and the American Correspondent Film Company, 1914–1918", *Film History* 4, 2 (1990): 123–129.
6. American Film Institute, *The American Film Institute Catalog: Feature Films, 1911–1920* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 318.
7. B.H. Canfield to J.C. Harper, 24 June 1915, E.W. Scripps Papers, Box 44, Mahn Center for Archives and Special Collections, Alden Library, Ohio State University, Athens, Ohio. The *Chicago Tribune* photographer is probably (once again) Edwin F. Weigle, who had filmed the fall of Antwerp and produced *The German Side of the War*.
8. Jane Addams, Emily G. Balch and Alice Hamilton, *Women at the Hague* (New York: Macmillan, 1915), 22–36.
9. Frau von Ihne's clinic was also mentioned by several other Americans who were in Berlin; see, for example, James Watson Gerard, *My Four Years in Germany* (New York: George H. Doran Co., 1917), 303; George B. McClellan, *The Heel of War* (G.W. Dillingham: 1915), 12.
10. H.L. Mencken, *35 Years of Newspaper Work: A Memoir by H. L. Mencken* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994), 65.
11. H.L. Mencken, *The American Language* (New York: A.A. Knopf, 1921), 362–363; Marion Elizabeth Rodgers, *Mencken: the American Iconoclast* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 163. Mencken was also right in saying that Bennett was head and shoulders better than the other correspondents. His coverage of the First World War is so good that it is a pity it has not been collected in book form (probably because Bennett was pro-German and, as it is said, history is written by the winners).
12. Jason Rogers, *Newspaper Building: Application of Efficiency to Editing, to Mechanical Production, to Circulation and Advertising* (New York: Harper Brothers, 1918), 152.
13. Dennis E. Showalter, *Tannenberg: Clash of Empires* (Dulles [Virginia]: Brassey's Inc., 2004), 243.
14. "Gen. Von Berhardi [sic], Germany's Famous Military Genius and Author, Discusses the War with Durborough", *Reno Evening Gazette* (16 August 1915): 3. See also Bernhardi, *Germany and England* (New

York: G.W. Dillingham Company, 1915, reprinted by Kessinger Publishing Company, 2000).

15. T.R. Ybarra, "America Annoys Bernhardi", *New York Times* (18 June 1922, Book Review Section): 44.
16. Norman Stone, *The Eastern Front 1914–1917* (London: Penguin Books, 1998), 181.
17. James O'Donnell Bennett, "East from Warsaw with the Germans", *New York Times* (13 October 1915): 3.
18. Doerries, *Imperial Challenge*, 276.
19. Stone, *The Eastern Front*, 181.
20. James O'Donnell Bennett, "Plain of Warsaw is all Desolation", *New York Times* (14 October 1915): 3.
21. "Kaiser as War Hero at Novo Georgievsk", *New York Times* (26 August 1915): 2. The correspondent is not identified, but it is highly likely to be Bennett.
22. Harry C. Carr, "Capturing the Kaiser", *Photoplay Magazine* (March 1916): 112.
23. Harry Carr, "Harry Carr's Encounter with the Kaiser; Thrilling Experience on the Russian Front", *Los Angeles Times* (29 August 1915): 1.
24. Stone, *The Eastern Front*, 182.
25. Barbara Tuchman, *The Zimmermann Telegram* (New York: Macmillan, 1958), 82–83; "How Germany Has Worked on U.S. To Shape Opinion, Block the Allies and Get Munitions for Herself, Told in Secret Agent's Letters", *New York The World* (15 August 1915): 1–3.
26. United States Congress. Senate Committee on the Judiciary (1918). Brewing and Liquor Interests and German and Bolshevik Propaganda, Vol. 2, 1433–1444, 2021–2023.
27. W.B. Spencer, "In re Irving Guy Reis [sic]. Alleged Fraudulent Use of Passport." 20 August 1915, Department of Justice, Old German Files, 1209–1921. Pub. no. 1085, case no. 7913, National Archive, R.G. 87, FBI Case Files.
28. Charles P. Tighe, "In re Irving Guy Reis [sic] (continued)", 22 September 1915. Ibid.
29. Doerries, *Imperial Challenge*, 144–146.
30. C.F. Scully, "In Re: Oswald F. Schuette (Dr. Marks) (German Activities)", Department of Justice, 19 October 1918, case no. 314677, National Archives FBI Case Files. Swing was Raymond Gram Swing, who later became a notable radio news announcer for the Blue Network, Mutual Broadcasting Company and ABC. H.L. Mencken said Swing became a "Radio Crooner". This charge from Ambassador Gerard appears to have stemmed from an earlier encounter between the correspondents and Gerard in Berlin. The American journalists covering the Central Powers had been furious because their dispatches bound for the United States would reach London and then be cut to shreds by the British censors or never be sent on at all. The correspondents asked Gerard to protest to London. Gerard, who was pro-British, stalled, then agreed to send their protest but said he would not endorse it. In fact, he sent it but said he disagreed with it, which was not part of the deal since he had said he would forward their protest with no comment at all. There was a huge altercation in which Schuette said that Gerard had violated their agreement, and Swing said that he was not frightened by any ambassador, adding, *sotto voce*, even if the ambassador was in the habit of taking up the passports of Americans who did not kowtow to him. Gerard then accused all the correspondents present of being German agents, and in the pay of the German government (of course, in the case of Hale, Gerard was right). The reporters went public with their accusations. Gerard agreed to some sort of retraction, but evidently he was still angry and convinced of Schuette's pro-Germanism. George Abel Schreiner, *The Craft Sinister* (New York: G. Albert Geyer, 1920), 250–256.
31. H.L. Mencken, *35 Years of Newspaper Work*, 71.
32. Kitty Kelly, "Flickerings from FilmLand", *Chicago Tribune* (10 December 1915): 15.
33. *Motion Picture News* (22 January 1916): 913.
34. *Oelwein Daily Register* (16 March 1916): 2; *La Crosse Tribune* (31 May 1916): 6; *Daily Kennebec Journal* (8 September 1916): 11; *Logansport Journal-Tribune* (3 March 1916): 9; *Denton Record Chronicle* (10 May 1916): 4; *Petersburg Daily Progress* (6 December 1916): 1; *Daily Mail* (Hagerstown, Md.) (6 May 1916): 9; *Waukesha Freeman* (10 February 1916): 8; *Janesville Daily Gazette* (20 May 1916): 6.
35. *American Film Institute Catalog*, 672.
36. A further complication regarding variations in the title of this film arises from Durborough's showing of his war footage in Kennebec, Maine on 8 September 1916. The ad in the *Daily Kennebec Journal* calls the film *With Durborough on the Firing Line*, and advertises "First showing anywhere of the only complete presentation of our present troubles in Mexico and with the personal appearance of the world famous war correspondent. An actual recital and pictorial record of Gen. Pershing's dash into war-ravaged Mexico." The accompanying article says that footage of Pershing's expedition, as well as footage of the battle of Vera Cruz, was to be shown with the European war footage. Evidently, Durborough shot film in Mexico as well as still photographs. He also showed *With Durborough on the Firing Line* in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, on 11 September 1916. See *Daily Kennebec Journal* (8 September 1916): 11 and *The Portsmouth Herald* (11 September 1916): 8.
37. Larry Wayne Ward, *The Motion Picture Goes to War* (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1985), 96–97.

38. "Film 'Battle' of Americans at Camp Lewis: Pictures will give Home Folks Idea of Transition From Civil to Army Life; War Conditions Carried Out", *Idaho Statesman* (7 January 1918): 5; "Camp Lewis Guns Shoot Real Shells", *San Jose Mercury News* (25 February 1918): 9.

39. *Olympia Record* (15 January 1918): 1.

40. *Philadelphia Inquirer* (13 August 1919): 16.

41. "Trousseau Tea at Murray Home", *The Ogden Standard Examiner* (Society Section) (17 June 1923): 1; "Hill Field Employees to Witness Show Thursday", *The Ogden Standard Examiner* (9 September 1942): 4, includes photograph of Durborough; "Military Gets Honors During Fund Luncheon", *The Ogden Standard Examiner* (17 March 1943): 8; "Miss Ogden Air Depot Enters Holiday Contest", *The Ogden Standard Examiner* (9 May 1943).

42. Ancestry.com. *California Death Index*, 1940–1997 [database-on-line]. Provo, UT. USA; The Generations Network Inc. 2000. Original Data: State of California Death Index, 1940–1997. Sacramento, CA, USA; State of California Department of Health Services, Center for Health Statistics.

43. *Chicago: Its History and Builders* (Chicago: S. J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1912), 481.

44. *Durborough War Pictures* (c) 1915. (c) Siegfried T. Jacobs (Wilbur H. Durborough, author); title, description, & 9 prints, 20 December 1915; MU500. *Catalogue of Copyright Entries*, 1912–1939.

45. John F. Cuneo, Jr., remembered that when he was nine, his father took him to San Simeon, the Hearst Estate. At lunch, John Cuneo, Sr., and Hearst were having a business conversation, and Marion Davies, seeing the boy was bored, took him for a tour of the estate, including the zoo. He still remembered her charm and graciousness.

46. Louis Pizzitola, *Hearst over Hollywood: Power, Passion and Propaganda in the Movies* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 366. Pizzitola, who also talked to John Cuneo, Jr., intimates that Hearst was probably involved in the film. Pizzitola also says that John Cuneo, Sr., was responsible for *The German Side of the War*. This was the film made by Edwin F. Weigle for *The Chicago Tribune*. John Cuneo, Sr., could have been involved in the financing of both films, but I find it more likely that Cuneo, Jr., who for a time did not know the name of his film, might have become confused when he was talking to Pizzitola . Since neither the *Chicago Daily News* nor the *Chicago Tribune* were Hearst newspapers, if Hearst was involved it was probably only marginally.

47. Sara L. Sloane, memorandum to William T. Murphy, National Archives, 7 October 1985; Library of Congress, M/B/RS Division, AFI: Cuneo Collection.

48. The Library of Congress only received thirty-two reels. What happened to the thirty-third reel is not certain.

49. *Pennsylvania State Board of Censors (Motion Pictures). List of Films, Reels and Views Examined. Act Passed 15 May 1915, P.L. 534.* (Harrisburg: J.L.L. Kuhn, 1918). Although it does not say so, the list apparently includes all of 1915, 1916 and 1917.

50. Various other factors also led the early "moving picture correspondents" to give it up, not the least being the emergence of newsreels on a regular basis; perhaps Julien Bryan was the only person successfully to continue the tradition into the 1960s.

Abstract: The Kaiser and the Cameraman: W.H. Durborough on the Eastern Front, 1915, *by Cooper C. Graham*

Wilbur H. Durborough was an American press photographer employed by the Newspaper Enterprise Association, an agency which supplied feature news stories to the members of its syndicate, providing both pictures and text. After photographing Pancho Villa in Mexico in 1914, Durborough arranged with German authorities to travel to Berlin, eventually gaining permission to record the aftermath of German successes on the eastern front. Durborough returned to the United States and toured with the film in 1915–16. Apparently released under various titles, it proved most popular in the traditionally German-American regions of the mid-west. The National Archives received thirty-three reels of *Durborough War Pictures* in 1985. The paper examines the history of Durborough's film project, and raises various questions concerning the relationship of the surviving material to the version seen by audiences at the time of the film's release.

Key words: Wilbur H. Durborough; World War I: Eastern Front; Pancho Villa; Kaiser Wilhelm II; documentary film; Warsaw, Poland; Gen. Paul von Hindenburg.